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COUNTRY Soviet Zone of Germany

REPORT NO.

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TOPIC Soviet Training Area of DOLLE-BORN (Letzling Heath)

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DATE OF CONTENT July 1949

DATE OBTAINED See below

DATE PREPARED 8 August 1949

REFERENCES

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This document is hereby regraded to CONFIDENTIAL in accordance with the letter of 16 October 1978 from the Director of Central Intelligence to the Archivist of the United States.

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1. General

a. As was learned from other US reports, detailed information on the DOLLE-BORN area is of interest.

b. DOLLE and BORN are located in the center of the Letzling Heath training area (boundary: NEUHALDENSBEN-WOLMI RSTEDT-TANGERHUELLE-VINZELBERG-GARDELEGEN). Units of all branches of service, chiefly component units of the Third Shock Army, individual units of all other armies in the Soviet Zone of Germany and GHQ units of the Group of Occupation Forces Germany trained at Letzling Heath from March to October of each year between 1947 and 1949. These maneuvers, in the summer of 1948, extended as far as the SALZ-EDEL area, possibly with troops coming from the training area of WEISSE ARTHE AND THE ADJACENT AREA on the south to participate in major combined-arms maneuvers held at Letzling Heath.

2. Camp DOLLE and BORN

From information obtained since 1947, it is assumed that training camps were located in the DOLLE-BORN area before and during the spring of 1949 (DOLLE). It is not yet possible to furnish detailed data on the location and capacity of the camps concerned. The following large camps were observed:

a. Area of DOLLE (1 mile west of the town of DOLLE). The camp area was estimated at a thousand acres in September 1948. Earth structures and large cantonment buildings were reported to be located there. The construction of concrete gun emplacements was observed. A permanent radio station is located between Camp DOLLE and the town of DOLLE.

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b. Area southwest of BORN (also called Camp NEUPLANKEN). The camp comprises two sections: the northern section in the area of BORN-NEUPLANKEN-O.F.PLANKEN-ALTPLANKEN, extending to the south and east for about 0.5 mile. A large open field, frequently used as a drill ground, is located immediately south of O.F.PLANKEN. An improved athletic field and a riding course are located on the newly constructed road leading from O.F.PLANKEN to ALTPLANKEN. The two camp sections were improved in 1948. One source, in the winter of 1948/1949, reported that the camps consisted of semi-underground cantonment buildings, with a quartering capacity of up to twenty thousand troops. More than fifty cantonment buildings were observed in the spring of 1949.

3. a. Exercises in the DOLLE-BORN area

Information from the DOLLE-BORN area frequently referred to the entire training area of Letzling Heath. It is therefore impossible to furnish exact data on the arrival and departure of maneuvering troops, their armament and their exercises. Artillery, infantry, engineer and signal units have formed the bulk of troops maneuvering in the mentioned area since 1947. Tank units sometimes participated in the exercises (presumably few tanks only due to the heavily overgrown area; 70 tanks were seen parked in the BORN area in March 1948).

(1) The number of practicing troops was estimated at five thousand in July 1947, at twenty-five thousand in July 1948, and at ten thousand in October 1948. It is assumed that about the same number of troops have been located there since the spring of 1949 as during the corresponding months of 1948.

b. The following practicing troops were observed:

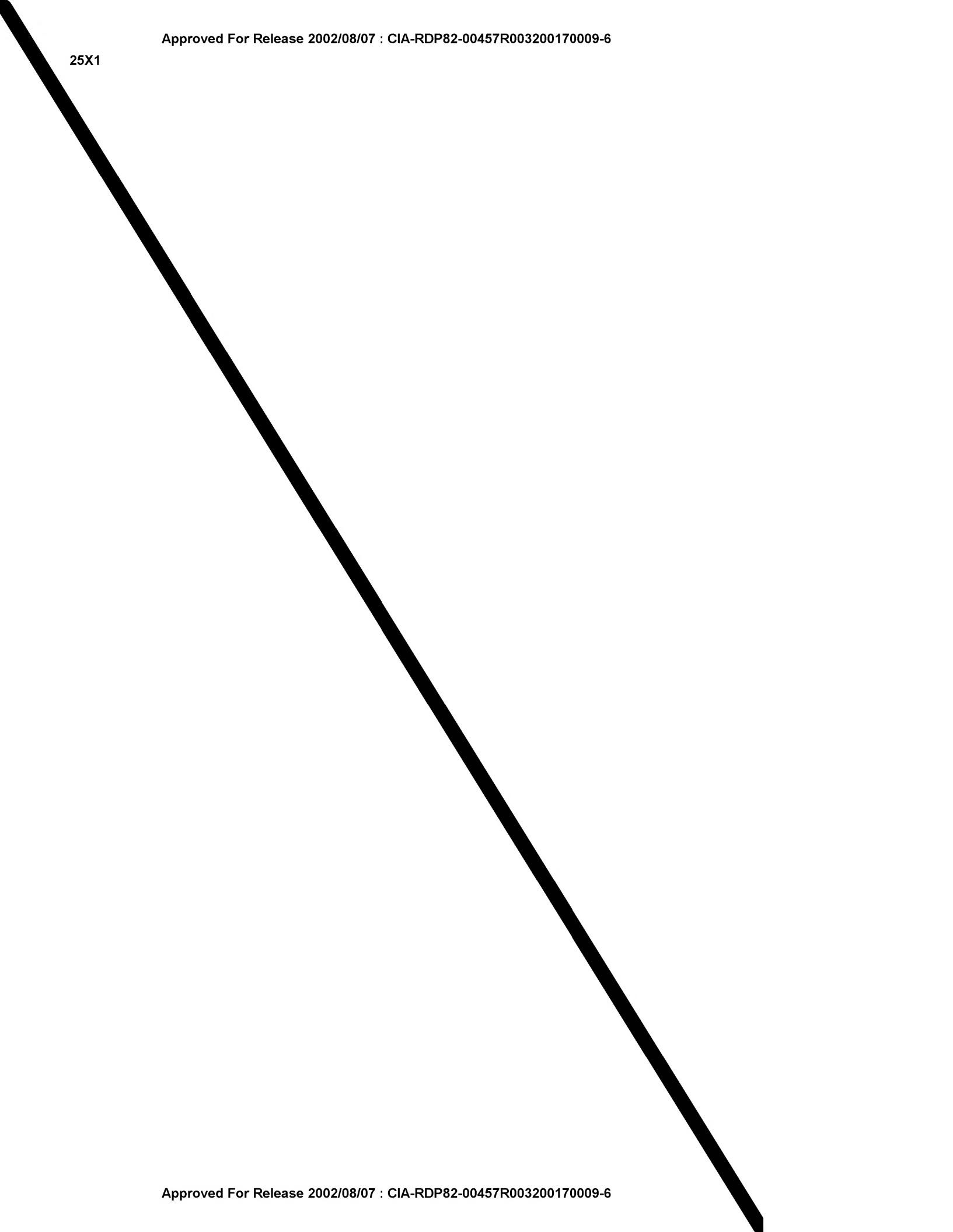
(1) 1947: Large artillery units with rocket launchers and guns of up to 150 mm caliber. Reporting sources that one or two divisions trained there. A high artillery headquarters was located in DOLLE in June 1947. Rocket launchers were seen there at the same time.

(2) 1948: Troops of several branches of service were there on maneuvers after March 1948, including antiaircraft units with medium guns (10-foot barrels with muzzle brake) which arrived in September 1948. A high unit headquarters (either Eq of the 18th Necz Div or the 207th Ltz rifle Div?) was located in BORN. Several divisions with 105 to 155-mm guns, rocket launchers and 50-mm and 88-mm antiaircraft guns were said to have trained in the DOLLE-BORN area from March to October 1948.

(3) 1949: Numerous antiaircraft artillery units (independent antiaircraft artillery units and antiaircraft artillery regiments or battalions of the divisions) with guns of all calibers arrived at Letzling Heath after the end of April 1949. A motorcycle unit (four companies, each equipped with 40 to 50 motorcycles having machine guns mounted on the sidecars) was located near BORN in mid-April 1949. In addition, component units of the Third Shock Army maneuvered in this area until June 1949.

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